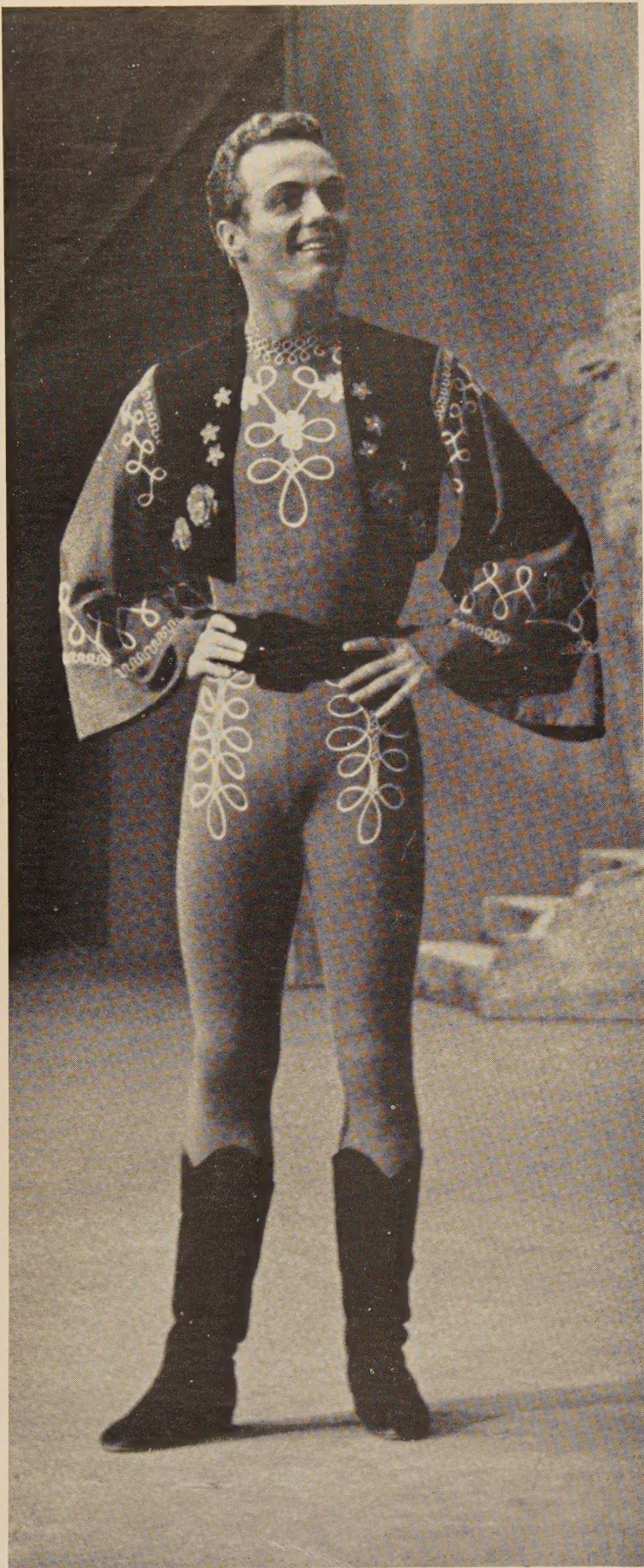


Ballet

TODAY



Natalie Krassovska and John Gilpin of Festival Ballet



Ballet

TODAY

EDITOR ESTELLE HERF

Cover Portrait

Natalie Krassovska and John Gilpin in Giselle. Photo: Mike Davis

Portrait this page: John Gilpin in Coppelia

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NEXT MONTH'S SPECIAL FEATURES

Mime is of vital importance

By Tamara Karsavina

The Royal Ballet in New York (cont.)

The first male dancer to be featured in our

Careers in Pictures series

JOHN GILPIN of FESTIVAL BALLET

many delightful portraits, an account of his career, and the roles in which he has danced.

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Subscription Rate: for 10 issues per year: Inland and Overseas 17/6d. per annum. Single copies 1/6d. monthly, post 4d. extra, from BALLET TODAY, 15, Upper Brighton Road, Surbiton, Surrey, England. Remittances from abroad must be made payable in England.

BALLET TODAY is published about the 25th of each month with the exception of two combined issues: Jan./Feb. and Aug./Sept. The publication date of combined issues is always announced well in advance.

Please make a note of this date.

The next issue of BALLET TODAY will be a combined one and will be published on 15th January, 1958.

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Printed by Richard Madley Ltd., 54 Grafton Way, W.1, England. SOLE AGENTS: Australasia: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch Ltd.; South Africa: Central News Agency Ltd. Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland: Messrs. Kingstons Ltd. U.S. Globe Newsdealers Distributing Co., 487 Broadway, New York City.

THE end of every year sees not only a period of looking forward, new hopes and plans for the months to come, but a certain amount of looking back. The uppermost feeling in the minds of those responsible for running specialist magazines must be one of relief that despite all the burdens laid upon them they have survived another year, although some of the bigger publications gave up trying to meet increasing costs of production.

Having survived what have we achieved? Our readers' letters from all over the world tell us how much pleasure we have brought into their lives by re-creating for them a world in which atom bombs, Sputniks and the turmoil of living are temporarily forgotten. There are those who will sneer at this escapism. Let them. There are far too many people in this world who think they know what is good for us, and go about trying to see we get it. The policy of this magazine is a simple one—to present news and stories of people in ballet and the dance world generally in such a way that the readers enjoy it. This I think we can claim to have achieved.

We have tried to cater for the whole family. We remember with pleasure the father who wrote in to ask the date of a certain festival "because although he personally had no interest in ballet, he had read an article in *Ballet Today* and found it interesting, and would like to take his family there during the summer holiday abroad."

We remember the readers who wrote saying they were coming from far-off places to see our dancers—one many thousands of miles away—from Australia—later I saw the lady night after night at Covent Garden during the season. Another wrote to say she is coming from Switzerland this Christmas time "in order to see Festival Ballet at the Royal Festival Hall." There are many such tributes, we print a few extracts from readers letters on page 22 of this issue, space will not allow us to publish them all. It is sufficient to say that our magazine goes all over the world, to people of every creed and nationality, sometimes to people who can only read a little English, often to those who never see ballet in their own countries, and if, as they tell us, they have found something in the magazine to interest them all, then we have achieved more than we dared hope.



BACKSTAGE

THE ROYAL BALLET

The Royal Ballet (formerly Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet) commencing their first season at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden on 26th December have three new works and one revival during their nine performances. The new ballets are *A Blue Rose* with choreography by Peter Wright, music by Samuel Barber and scenery and costumes by Yolande Sonnabend; *The Angels* choreographed by John Cranko, music by Richard Arnell, scenery and costumes by Desmond Heeley, and *The Burrow*, choreography by Kenneth Macmillan, music by Frank Martin, scenery and costumes by Nicholas Georgiadis. *Veneziana* is the ballet to be revived. This should be a very interesting season, and will be reported fully in our next issue.

ALICIA MARKOVA

Markova's admirers in this country and all over the world will be delighted to hear that she has been chosen by the American

Professional Women's Group Federation as one of the five Key Women of the Year for her achievements in the world of art, and is to be presented with a Golden Key at a dinner in New York on 4th December. Another group to do homage to our great ballerina is in Buenos Aires, where The Club Admiradores de Alicia Markova has just been formed.

YVETTE CHAUVIRE

During September, Yvette Chauviré was invited to dance at the Titania Palace on the occasion of the Berlin Festival, when the *Dame aux Camélias* with choreography by Tatiana Gsovsky was performed. Marguerite Gautier was danced by Yvette Chauviré, and Armand Duval by Gert Reinholm supported by Mme. Gsovsky's company. Music by Henri Sauguet, decors and costumes by Jean Pierre Ponnelli.

Yvette Chauviré has not renewed her

Photo by Mike Davis
In the wings awaiting their cue.

contract with the Paris Opéra, and at the time of going to press no plans for her future have been made. In a letter to *Ballet Today* Yvette asks me to say how much she appreciated the affection of the English people shown her during the visit of Her Majesty the Queen at the royal state visit to Paris this year.

THE BOLSHOI FILM

Madame Morosini-Whelan of the Dublin Ballet Productions can always be counted upon to support any ballet activities in her area, and when it was made known that the Bolshoi Ballet film would be shewing in Dublin her Club immediately applied for and secured a block booking for a Sunday night, the first time this has ever been done.

The Rank Organisation tell me that the Bolshoi Ballet film is to be released in the following countries: Germany, France, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Hong Kong, Malaya, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, South Africa, Portugal and Holland, the last two during November. In Switzerland the film was released on 7th October. Arrangements are also being made to road-show the film throughout the United Kingdom.

FESTIVAL BALLET CLUB

A Christmas party is to be held by the Club at The Abbey Community Centre, 29, Marsham Street, Victoria, S.W.1, on Friday, 20th December. Tickets, for members 8s. 6d. and guests 12s. 6d., can be obtained from London Festival Ballet Club, 59, Sloane Street, London, S.W.1.

BRUSSELS WORLD EXHIBITION

The Hungarian State Folk Ensemble, which visited London for three weeks in mid-1956, are to appear at the Brussels Grande Palace during the 1958 World Fair. The company will also tour Belgium following the Fair.

Folk dancers belonging to the ensemble will take part in international competitions run during the Fair.

The Hungarian State Opera will present a performance of the works of Béla Bartók, including *The Wooden Prince*, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* and *The Miraculous Mandarin*.

The opera performances will take place in the 2,000 capacity theatre built in the exhibition grounds.

MONTE CARLO

The grand international ballet season will take place from 22nd December to 5th January inclusive. M. Eugène Grunberg will present during this fortnight, the stars of the Paris Opéra, the New York Negro Ballet, the Ballet of the Chinese Theatre and the Grand Ballet Espagnol.

BIND YOUR BALLET TODAY

There are only a few copies of *Ballet Today* binder available, so if you want one for Christmas you must hurry. Price 12s. 6d. each including postage, each binder holds 24 copies of the present size of the magazine.

BALLET RAMBERT

Ballet Rambert has been granted £5,000 over the three years 1958-60 to "enable the oldest ballet in Britain to enlarge its small orchestra and company, and to undertake more frequent original productions" by the Board of Trustees of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.



Hope Sheridan

Reporting
the
ROYAL BALLET
in
NEW YORK

THE two years which have passed since we have seen the company have produced a number of changes. In the majority of cases these have been changes in growth, artistic development and technical proficiency. Since we are all familiar with the excellence of Fonteyn's *Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake* and have seen them often I shall plead lack of space and confine myself to a survey of the performances of the junior ballerinas and their partners as well as the echelon of soloists.

September 10th—Nerina's **SLEEPING BEAUTY**

Here is a dancer whose technical qualifications over-shadow those of most of her associates. She has ballon, brio, a fine dazzling batterie and a more than adequate line. Her Aurora is a lively, pert child of great physical well being and unabashed certainty. She has aplomb, speed and surety. Never is a moment in doubt. Perhaps, in this very strength lies some of Nerina's weakness. There is almost too much directness in her portrayal. We see her as a one-dimensional character, lacking shading and nuance. True, Aurora is a child of sunlight, just as in the vision scene she is a child of moonlight and shadow, yet there are as many shades of sunlight as there are of shadow. The tiny moments of Fonteyn's performances which frame the picture of the young Aurora we first meet are somehow missing. For example: the effervescent freshness with which she bursts upon the stage on her first entrance; her gracious response to her father's indications that these young princes have come to pay her court; her delightful excitement at the newness of each passing moment. Fonteyn has had the time to realize such shadings and we can understand the lack of them in the performances of the young ballerinas, however, this alone does not make up for their absence. Miss Nerina's allegro work is extraordinarily brilliant, her beats and tiny, travelling steps are flecked with mercury. The overall effect, however, is marred by a persistent musical insensitivity. David Blair, already a fine stage dancer is learning admirably to develop, as well, a fine stage personality. His prince suffers less now from the usual over-imperiousness of young danseur's princes. A quality of graciousness is slowly beginning to infuse his interpretation. He is no longer simply a porter but a human, likeable Prince whose moodiness is understandable and whose enchantment in the vision scene is believable. He dances Florimund's thankless Act III solo cleanly, with ease and elevation and partners Act II and III superbly.

September 15th—Beriosova's **SLEEPING BEAUTY**

The character of Aurora is a difficult one to crystalize, equally difficult for the artist to focus on. It is so easy, simply to be a charming young girl, bien élevée, and let it go there. At this point Aurora is proving to be the most elusive of Beriosova's tasks on both dramatic and technical levels. Her characterization swings like the pendulum on a clock. At one time we are treated to a dear, sweet, 16 year old child; at another we are greeted by an imperious little princess quite aware of who she is and that this is, after all, her domain. While this balancing act is going on the audience may have the somewhat dubious pleasure of extending their sympathies one moment and being held at arms length the next. Technically, Miss Beriosova appears not to be wholly at ease in the choreography with the exception of the vision scene. Her Act I variation begins well and then slows to a perceptive halt (although some of this may well be attributed to the funereal tempi adopted by Hugo Rignold, the Royal Ballet's latest



conductor whose talents bear a startling resemblance to those of Anatole Fistoulari's). Any enchaînement containing a series of quick, travelling steps (piqués, pirouettes, and chaînés) may meet with success or momentary failure. We have the distinct sensation during almost any allegro variation that the outcome is in doubt until the final pose. At the present time, this state of affairs has a tendency to undermine what might otherwise be the basic framework for a fine performance. Perhaps time and plenty of work on the rough spots will correct this situation. Philip Chatfield's Prince Florimund is still not a three-dimensional character. The role of the Prince is not a meaty one and to be more than a bland backdrop against which Aurora moves takes a big of doing. It is necessary to sit down and determine who Florimund is, what he thinks, what his stage problems are and then assume this character whose theatrical outlines have been fully blocked in. Chatfield has not yet done this although his partnering is fine and his Act III variation certainly well danced.

September 25th—Nerina's **SWAN LAKE**

Swan Lake has always been a most deceptive ballet for two reasons: its strength has endured it the hundreds of performances by lesser dancers the world over; the fact that this self-same structure has always pointed up these performers' weaknesses. Many dancers, the most superb dancers, cannot dance *Swan Lake*, it simply eludes them. I think this is a particular case in point. Nerina can dance every choreographic ounce of *Swan Lake*, but her musical insensitivity sets her adrift from all aid or direction given by the orchestral colourations. Again the subtleties of Odette's transfiguration from swan to woman escape her. Miss Nerina has a tendency to play Odette simply as a woman, a sweet one and let it go at that. Similarly in Act III her Odile is a portrait of open evil as opposed to her conception of Odette as a figure of simple goodness. Actually, within their own framework these two portraits form a careful balance. On the credit side of the ledger: her wide clean extensions; a high, open, beautifully stretched arabesque which utilizes to its fullest a superbly arched back; lightness of foot; a strong well pointed foot; a capacity to travel across the stage like mercury. These make for fine dancing and whenever we are watching Miss Nerina we are watching a fine dancer. Certainly her Act III has the fire and brio required by the choreography, its only failing being a dramatic one. David Blair has been working steadily on the character of Siegfried. His Act I prince is pleased by his surroundings and company; certainly a likeable young man. His Act II and Act IV are weakest dramatically. He has not yet found the proper tenor for Act II but we have the distinct feeling he is very close to the truth and another season should disclose it. Act III is easily the best for it is technically brilliant and dramatically well conceived. His partnering is a thing of joy for here is a man who takes conscience in presenting his ballerina well.

Right: Margot Fonteyn with David Webster, General Administrator of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, at a party given by Sol Hurok for the Company at the Hotel St. Regis on opening night at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York

Hope Sheridan's photo by David Gahr



September 22nd—Beriosova's SWAN LAKE

Every ballerina has a ballet with her name on it. *Swan Lake* in time may well be Beriosova's. At present it is not complete. There are flashes of great beauty followed by rather static patches. Not all of it flows from the spring, but it is far and away the best *Swan Lake* in junior order to Fonteyn's. It is difficult to project into the theatrical future and forecast qualities of performance. So much can happen to mar forecasts, but I shall take the plunge and say that if Beriosova's performance continues to develop as surely as it gives every indication of doing then a very few years will usher in a *Swan Lake* of truly heroic proportions. Flashes of insight into the depths of the Odette character are visible in Act II. That Beriosova has penetrated to a valid level is apparent. What may be eluding her are the means with which to project the ideas that are in a state of crystalization. This is often the stumbling block of many young artists, for stage craft of the veteran variety, is something more than just a term. Now she should carefully examine the language at her disposal and see how it may best serve what she individually has to say. Act II is strongest for her; gaining immeasurably from her overwhelming musicality and lyricism; from an innate sense of what is classically true; from a breath-taking classical line with which some dancers are gifted apparently through a special arrangement with God; from an awareness that the portrayal of Odette must pass from the mystic to the natural and back. Act III is next in the order of excellence. This characterization is growing in stature, although, the exact quality of Odile's malevolence is not clear; nor has Beriosova yet made her mind up as to the exact means by which Odile's conquest of Siegfried is made. Technically, this Act has become stronger and if the fouettés continue to pose a problem, they are coming; still lacking are speed and brio. Her Act IV is weakest dramatically. It suffers from not being carefully outlined and then thought out. Perhaps, here, more than anywhere else, we are aware of the wealth of detail with which Fonteyn's Act IV is filled. The reasons for Odette's fate should be clear, her reactions to her lover's duplicity and her response to his sincere remorse should be equally clear, although stated through rich, yet subtle, mime. At present, these points remain to be declared. Strongest of all is her encompassing musicality which sweeps the Act along to its final pose.

Chatfield's Prince Siegfried is also a study in growth. His Act I needs attention to further mimic detail, but Act II is gentle and extraordinarily sincere. His work with his partner is deft and his air is dedicated. His reaction to von Rothbart's spell is a fine example of what the male lead can do with this very well known curtain scene. Act III needs the deeper shadings which can only be gained by more intensive work with his ballerina. Together they must determine this scene, not separately. However, his solo work in this Act is fine. Act IV is beginning to shape up very well. Here Chatfield's overwhelming sincerity stands him in good stead.

October 5th—Rowena Jackson's SWAN LAKE

It is difficult to criticise this dancer without first criticising the management. No artist, regardless of his or her individual drives, can be expected to achieve everything by working all alone. Rowena Jackson's performances bear no trace of a guiding hand. Her Odette/Odile is an unfinished dual portrait, the barest outlines of which have been sketched in, its colours sure only where the artist is on familiar territory. If only someone would take the time and patience to say, "look here, finish out that arabesque." "In this spot, pause a moment to underline the effect . . .", and so on. Her Act III is brilliant,

technically, fouettés being interspersed with doubles and triples. None of the technical language of this or any other Act gives her the slightest bit of trouble. However, her *Swan Lake* has a blurred, out-of-focus, quality about it. Michael Somes as Prince Siegfried turns in a fine job and is at all times an admirable partner. His mime in Act IV being particularly effective.

September 13th—Nerina's SYLVIA

To my mind, *Sylvia* is one of Ashton's most charming creations. It is fashioned certainly of all the stuff necessary to provide a work-horse repertoire ballet: fine late 19th century scenery and costumes by the Ironside brothers, Delibes most charming score, and a whale of a role for the ballerina. The ensembles are not only choreographed with great feeling for movement but also with humorous understanding of the period's requirements.

Nadia Nerina makes of *Sylvia* a young and authoritative person of dash and a certain winning vigour. As in all of her roles, Miss Nerina brings to the stage a great sense of sureness. In *Sylvia* her fine ballon is shown to marvellous advantage in both Acts I and II. If the dramatic requirements of Act II are given paler shadings than they need, Act I is danced to the hilt and shows her off to better advantage than previous ballets. Act III's superb pas de deux is excellently handled as well as the variations in Act II. Here is easily the company's most airborne nymph.

David Blair dances Aminta well, but somehow has not yet gained the style required to play the role. However, his variation and partnering in Act III are a pleasure to behold. John Hart as Orion is a menace in the grand old style; just right for this ballet. That the audience barely restrained itself from hissing at the appropriate melodramatic moments is a compliment to his art.

September 14th (mat.)—Anya Linden's SYLVIA

One of the most exciting experiences of the season is the emergence of this young dancer. Until now we have seen her in minor roles but never pressed by the exigencies of a three-act work. *Sylvia* proved conclusively that she was not only equipped to cope with most of these requirements, but to give the role a three-dimensional reading as well as endow it with a luminous quality, all her own. She chooses to play the nymph in all her effervescent youth, bursting with pride at her own prowess, gently but radiantly yielding to the new emotions which overwhelm her. She has an innate honesty which pervades every gesture, even the most hackneyed. When she is at last able to cope with all the technical demands and has the stamina to last through the third Act, we shall have a *Sylvia* of no mean proportions. At present, Miss Linden is a dramatically convincing, talented, young artist with a great deal of work to do, but there is no denying a certain exceptional quality lying just below the surface. Philip Chatfield dances the role of Aminta with a fine manliness. He partners well and looks well but in this particular case, is given over to underplaying which is out of tenor with this ballet. Bryan Ashbridge turns in a commendable job of Orion.

Left: Svetlana Beriosova (who danced the Lilac Fairy on opening night), Margaret Wing, Michael Somes and his wife Deirdre Dixon all celebrate the beginning of what is to be the longest ever tour of the United States and Canada

Right: "Gary Burne and Doreen Wells" said Hope Sheridan "uncorked a simply sensational mambo at the party."

All photos of the Royal Ballet are by Louis Mélancon.

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THE ROYAL BALLET—(Continued.)

September 14th—Fonteyn's SYLVIA

Ashton created *Sylvia* for Fonteyn. The first time we saw her performance, several years ago, the ballet fitted this superb artist like a glove. However, the years have passed and, in this case, not without leaving their mark. While she is far and away the best Sylvia, not everything is quite the same. The marvellous spontaneity of youth which Fonteyn brings so joyously to her Aurora is somehow lacking here. One senses a mite of forcing in her Act I scenes with her attendant nymphs. Her ballon is still unimpaired and her batterie brilliant as ever. She brings to the wounded Sylvia all the powers of her mature artistry and from the end of Act I onwards we have her once more completely in command. Fonteyn's Act II should be examined by every ballerina in the company to see how an artist handles a trite situation with taste and timing. It's a gem in its own right. The Act III pas de deux is beautifully performed with an élan we seldom see. The essence of working with your partner and helping him help you is something most of the junior ballerinas have yet to learn. Michael Somes makes a completely credible Aminta and partners with his customary ease. I think at this point it is necessary to remark upon the really fine job Peter Clegg and Brian Shaw do as slaves. Alexander Grant's Eros has lost none of its wit.

September 21st—Nadia Nerina's COPPELIA

Miss Nerina's sparkling soubrette quality fits perfectly the light-hearted tenor of this ballet. Her Swanilda has a buoyancy which almost gives the lie to some very pedestrian, new choreography. She dances Act I and Act III with verve. Delibes' bubbling rhythms seem to be made for her flashing points. Dramatically, Miss Nerina plays Swanilda as a serious role. She never spoofs the character and enters into the charade with such disarming honesty that we perforce accept Swanilda on Miss Nerina's terms.

David Blair has a role in Franz that is tailor-made for him. He dances it with aplomb and plays it as the slightly devil-may-care young man Franz really is. His mime is excellent throughout and his partnering is distinguished. John Hart offers a commendable Coppélius. In Act III, Anya Linden as Aurora and Mary Drage as Prayer do outstanding work.

October 4th—Svetlana Beriosova's COPPELIA

Miss Beriosova's conception of Swanilda is a completely individual one. Firstly, she approaches the ballet with the understanding and compassion one bears for a folk tale translatable into many tongues and their inherent idioms. Secondly, she has great wit with which to etch most of the mischief intended. She does this admirably. Swanilda is one of her best roles and she dances it with an air of levity seldom seen elsewhere in her stage work. Miss Beriosova is relaxed in this ballet and it is very apparent. It also contributes to a performance of speed, humour and dash. Her Swanilda is petulant, mischievous, demanding, young, sure of herself and very much in love with life. Here is a well conceived characterisation carried out with intelligence. Her Act III variation is beautifully danced and I fancy I caught some piqué jumps on point not seen elsewhere. They add a swift and dazzling touch.

Philip Chatfield is still shaping his Franz but he is very much on the right track. His insistence on playing to his partner whether they be stage front or back is beginning to bear fruit. It produces a better performance for both of them. He dances his measures well and makes of Franz every inch a virile young man. His weakest scene is that with Coppélius but this is simply a matter of continuing to work on it. Lerlie Edwards makes of Coppélius a very sympathetic old tinkerer.

New Ballets September 11th—LES PATINEURS

In its new, cinemascope version, designed for the vastness of the Bolshoi stage, one of the oldest pieces in the company's repertoire has taken on a new look. I have no idea how this supplemented version will look on the Covent Garden stage, for although the stage of the Garden and the Metropolitan are similar in size, the Met auditorium is much larger and deeper. This new version caters to that added range. In moving the backcloth further back to allow for the addition of ensembles in depth, *Patineurs* has taken on more of a spectacle appearance. Perhaps, some of its intimacy has been lost, but I for one never felt that intimate ballets gained anything by presentation in a house the size of the Met. Hence the enlargement of *Patineurs* has met a visual need. The ballet is now a big dance ballet designed to show off not only individual dancers but ensemble work as well. Since the Royal Ballet has ensembles it can well be proud of, I think the ballet has gained rather than lost through the changes. Brian Shaw, Rowena Jackson and Annette Page turn in some fine pyrotechnics while Anya Linden and Desmond Doyle as the couple in White contribute a very nice pas de deux.

September 11th—BIRTHDAY OFFERING

Specially composed by Frederick Ashton to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Royal Ballet (Sadler's Wells), *Birthday Offering* was designed to show off the individual styles of the seven ballerinas. Set to the music of Glazounov arranged by Robert Irving, the ballet has been dressed charmingly by André Levasseur in a style faintly reminiscent of theatrical costuming during the Second Empire period.

KARSAVINA'S MAGIC

DURING the summer I was a privileged spectator at a special class in ballet and mime. Bright sunshine dappled the leaves of a chestnut tree and slanted through the open windows of the Chelsea studio where a class of some thirty students were going through preliminary barre exercises. Everyone was filled with a sense of occasion as a slim upright grey-haired figure in elegant black with cerise jacket, moved quietly about the studio, correcting an arm, raising a chin, demonstrating a position—for Tamara Karsavina, president of the 1957 Congress, had graciously consented to give a special class for the Federation of Russian Classical Ballet.

Time has laid a gentle finger on the great Russian ballerina, and there was no mistaking the dark brown eyes with their finely chiselled lids and veiled sadness, and the long oval face of a dancer famed for her beauty as well as her artistry, whose photograph adorns every book on the history of ballet.

"This is really a class for the more senior students", Barbara Vernon whispered to me, "but some of the babies have slipped in"—and I caught a glimpse of two or three small sprites solemnly following the lesson.

Mme. Karsavina's poetic ease was an enchantment and delight, and her concern for line and expressiveness and example and inspiration. She seemed pleased with the responsiveness of the pupils, who were well placed, without mannerisms or affectation, and moved with an air of freedom and joy in the dance. She said that the schooling sponsored by the Federation reminded her of her own training at the Maryinsky—the pure Russian style that has produced some of the greatest dancers the world has ever seen. As I watched, the fabulous past seemed to fill the room. I saw the child at the Maryinsky School and then the seventeen-year-old girl making her debut in a company containing those legendary names of the Golden Age of ballet. I saw the rebel, seeking with Fokine, Stravinsky, Bakst, and Nijinsky new ways of expression under Diaghilev's leadership . . . those famous roles in the first *Sylphides*, *Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *Spectre*, among so many others . . . She had been part of it all and inspired so much, and now, in the country that has become hers, she was passing on her inheritance.

After delighting everyone with a gay and witty mimed trifle of a boy and girl who take a boat and go fishing, Madame Karsavina took the class through an eloquent and beautiful sequence from *Sylvia*—the St. Petersburg version and taught her by the famous Pavel Gerdt who had known the great Romantic ballerinas.

The class crossed and re-crossed the room following their distinguished teacher, and I saw one of the sprites—a minute figure in black tights and tunic and rather engulfed by the seniors—intently watching every movement and gesture, an expression of complete absorption on her vivid little face. Only the insubstantial years seemed to lie between the child at the Maryinsky and the child in the Chelsea studio.

PIGEON CROWLE

Next Month: Mime is of Vital Importance, by Tamara Karsavina.

THE ROYAL BALLET—(Continued from page 6)

The ballet's form takes the shape of an entrée for the seven ballerinas with their cavaliers, a variation for each of the ballerinas, two ensemble dances for the men, a pas de deux for Fonteyn and Sones which is the apex of the ballet, and an ensemble finale. Maryon Lane, Anya Linden and Annette Page dance the solos which were originally set for Elaine Fifield, Violetta Elvin and Beryl Grey. I assume these variations have been altered somewhat to suit the personalities of the young ladies now dancing them, however, let it be said that the replacement solos carry their own weight. *Birthday Offering* is a rare work for several reasons. It provides the company with a showcase for its ballerinas and premier danseurs. It is a work eminently musical with a quality that is at once bravura yet unforced. Most important of all, it is a work which allows Ashton to display his creative powers as they are stimulated and fulfilled in each of the ballerinas. We seldom see a successful work which is also an academic lesson. Three variations come almost immediately to mind: Nadia Nerina's mercurial jumps and beautifully sustained balances, superbly performed; the soft, legato passages for Beriosova, utilising completely her capacity to realise each movement and gesture as part of a musical statement; the marvellous enchainements of travelling steps for Fonteyn which remind one of nothing so much as a shaft of sunlight moving luminously across the stage. We have had proven to us in almost every ballet he has ever produced, what a master of the romantic adage Ashton is. He seldom makes use of flashy, acrobatic lifts, nor does he ask of his dancers grotesqueries aimed at shock effects. Instead, he works softly with the "quiet" language, the language of tiny beats, attitudes, bourrées and développés. From these voices he has fashioned now a pas de deux which sings as sweetly and gently as any lute song. Also adding their considerable talents to the charm of *Birthday Offering* are Rowena Jackson, Anya Linden, Annette Page, Maryon Lane, David Blair, Brian Ashbridge, Brian Shaw, Alexander Grant and Desmond Doyle.

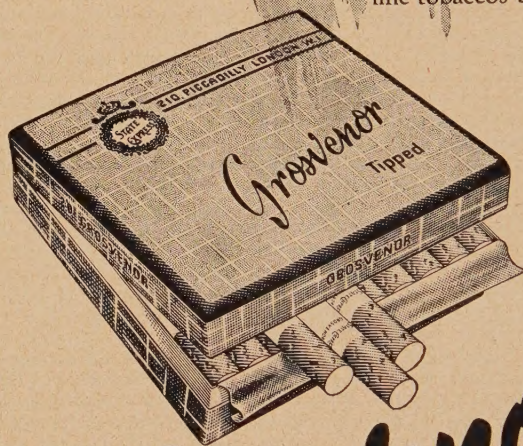
To be continued next month.



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The Grammar of the Dance

PART TWO :

THE CHOREOGRAPHER

BY DR. W. G. RAFFÉ

DANCE is as old as human society. The choreographer, by this name, is a relatively modern professional: an arranger, writer or planner, and producer of spectacular dance for the Theatre. His fellow in the modern ballroom is the Master of Ceremonies, an older title, but now somewhat more ornamental than fully functional. He does not arrange dances but sometimes selects them; and instead he arranges the partners.

Dance function, in its several social meanings, has always thrown up individuals who have, by experience and intelligence, gained enough knowledge to arrange dance form. Often the social movement is not named as dance; nor is it so understood. The current "presentation at court" directed by the person known as the Lord Chamberlain, is now the faint shadow of the court ceremonial, when it had a closer connection with the ball and the ballet. The solemn processional, done in full at the magical ceremonials of the *kirke*, moves in a stately prose rhythm, with music and chant. On the first sacrament of a new building, the consecration and dedication occupies many hours, requiring a triple procession around the building, followed by more inside the edifice, accompanied by knockings, incensings and anointings, banishings and chantings; all in measured step by step, governed by musical form. The canon is the priest who had the work of "measuring off" the places, positions, and movements of the officiants. He was in effect the choreographer; his central place was the choir. He does not write his motion; this is ordered by ritual tradition and innovations are avoided. He may be *Choregus* but he is not *Grapheus*.

Solemn dance in processional mode appears in many social functions: it contacts the princely courts and the halls of law where lawyers fence off justice by barriers of law. This ritual movement crops up in our Assembly, the Houses of Parliament, marked by the coming and going of Black Rod; as in the law court by Tip-staff; or in Guild and Municipal offices by the Mace-bearer. These social ceremonies follow tradition; little change is involved. The Mess of the Guildhall Banquet may rival the military Officers Mess and both have links with the religious Mess or Mass; each ceremony is accompanied by its proper stimulus of music.

Feudal Europe saw many such officers, entrusted with the formal scheme or arrangement of Feast and Festival. Some were called steward, others baile-reeve and shire-reeve—shortened to bailiff and sheriff; and there was frequently a chamberlain and a chatelaine. Many of these ceremonies are ruled in position and movement, by older and simpler affairs, such as the election of Saxon kings. The elected person was hoisted on his shield "to see and be seen." In a modern Jewish wedding, bride and groom pass or dance round the ring of guests after the ceremony—"to see and be seen". On a national scale—the affair becomes a coronation. Russian weddings use the crown—sometimes a treasure of singular beauty, kept in the village church—as they are seen only for the hour, crowned by mystical ceremony. But these crowns make no contact with the bridal pair; they are suspended in the air over their heads.

In our modern eclectic Theatre, it is necessary for the fully informed choreographer to know something of these traditional ceremonies which border on dance form in ballet. The Polish/Russian *mazurka*, the *Polka* and *polonaise*; the *kolo* or *khoro*, or the Celtic *branle*, all move in and out of the total ceremonial formation, where older traditions must be recalled to indicate the richness of the story. Merely to fill up with technical acrobatics, is to reject the treasury of traditional dance for a mechanical superficiality of meaningless movement.

The choreographer has fulfilled his important social function in many periods; under many names; but essentially he is the arranger of the ceremonies with dance and music, though often contested by the early professional composers. When court ballet developed into its two streams of the salon and the theatre, the professional dancing master gained in importance. The sixteenth century in Europe was the main age of the change from the courtier and functionary to the professional man who could be engaged from outside the clique; and then the modern choreographer—who was now the dancer-arranger as well as the dance-teacher—came into his vocation. When the Theatre set out to reproduce Greek tragedies and Latin comedies, then some antiquarian research got started, developing the two opposing schools of classicism and romanticism. Old plays were for some decades performed in current costume. Not until the age of Teutonic realism—topped by the Duke of Mieringen and his professors—demanded visual realism, did the merely decorative ballet change into the fullness of dramatic ballet. In similar vein, painters dropped into the callous realism of Spanish art, before another period supported the romantic theme. This has continued now for a century and a half; so that now there is a present need for new romantic ballets, using the wealth of technique and experience, but with real

creative power. This is the task which faces the genuine modern choreographer—he may call his result classical ballet or modern dance—but most definitely he must have some story to relate, if he would capture and retain his audience. The Nineteenth-century classics are wearing very thin, and new writers of dance must offer better work than timid and tiny variations.

The grammar of dance has world tradition for its vocabulary; not merely the supposed academic tradition of the French court, even as modified by Russian, French and Danish arrangement. Hence the quaint theory: that this strange animal "the young choreographer" can produce efficient art works in dance, must be set aside. One of the first necessities is the reinstatement of study and practise in Mime and Gesture, relieved of the ignorant relegation of this phase of dance under the slightly derogatory term of "character"—as though it didn't matter. Another task is the urgent need to study folk dance and song, as well as the vast treasury of ancient religious dance ritual. Without these sources, the poor choreographer remains ill-equipped to create truly magnificent ballet. At present, too many pseudo-choreographers undertake too great a task with too little experience. As for the "art directors" it seems that the more this title is claimed, the less we may expect to contact genuine creative art or administrative control.

Next Month: The Dancer.

DIARY

FESTIVAL BALLET

Nov. 18th to 30th *Palace Theatre, Manchester*
2nd Dec. *Hippodrome Theatre, Brighton*
At the Royal Festival Hall, London
24th December to 11th January
A Christmas Presentation of *The Nutcracker*
Daily 2.30 and 7.30 — except Christmas Day

THE ROYAL BALLET

(formerly Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet)
W/c Nov. 25th *New Theatre, Hull*

AT COVENT GARDEN

26th Dec. Thurs. (mat) 2 p.m.
PINEAPPLE POLL. A BLUE ROSE (1st performance).
THE ANGELS (1st performance)
26th Dec. Thurs. (eve)
PINEAPPLE POLL. A BLUE ROSE. THE ANGELS.
28th Dec. Sat. (mat) 2 p.m.
VENEZIANA. A BLUE ROSE. THE ANGELS.
1st Jan. Wed. (eve)
GISELLE. PINEAPPLE POLL.
2nd Jan. Thurs. (eve)
LES SYLPHIDES. THE BURROW (1st performance)
VENEZIANA.
8th Jan. Wed. (eve)
LES SYLPHIDES. THE BURROW. VENEZIANA.
10th Jan. Fri. (eve)
VENEZIANA. GISELLE.
15th Jan. Wed. (eve)
A BLUE ROSE. THE BURROW. PINEAPPLE POLL.
17th Jan. Fri. (eve)
LES SYLPHIDES. THE ANGELS. THE BURROW.
A BLUE ROSE.

End of the Ballet Season.

THE ROYAL BALLET

During period Nov. 29-Jan. 24th the Company will be touring the following cities:
Seattle, Vancouver, Minneapolis, Chicago, Detroit, Toronto, Cleveland, Montreal.

THE KUNSTGROEP THOR OF TORHOUT, BELGIUM

At the Royal Albert Hall, London.
Sunday, 5th January at 3 p.m.
At the Free Trade Hall, Manchester.
Mon. and Tues. 6th and 7th Jan. 7.30 p.m.
At the Stadium, Liverpool. Wed. 8th January 7.30 p.m.

AIRS AND GRACES 1957

(in aid of the Forces Help Society)

At the Scala Theatre, London. Saturday, Dec. 14th at 2.30 p.m.
(Tickets obtainable from The Forces Help Society, 35, Thurloe Street, London, S.W.7. Ken. 6663)

LONDON REVIEWS

MARCEL MARCEAU

Cambridge Theatre, 14 October, 1957.

Somewhere in the Southern Hemisphere or beyond the Iron Curtain there may be another mime of the class of Marcel Marceau: if there is, his existence is unknown to the European or American theatregoer. Marceau, now supported by a company of eight, presents programmes of elaborate mime-dramas, mime duets, and solos; some of the latter are performed nicely by Gilles Segal (Marceau's oldest associate). But the performance rests solidly on the skill, invention and superb artistry of Marceau himself—a mime in the great tradition beginning with Deburau, and, I dare bet, as effective in his best performances as Deburau himself, who flourished at the same time as Taglioni, Grisi and Ellsler.

To see even one of this man's pantomimes is to realise immediately that no other mime performer of our time can even hope to hold a candle to him. He has adapted from the old tradition, and added certain refinements derived from the contemporary world, so that his system of silent acting literally does convey much more than most actors can suggest by means of speech, silence, and movement.

The supporting players work well and, within the limits of their several skills, they make pleasing entertainments out of the three lengthy mime-dramas: *The Wolf of Tsukimi*, *The 14th of July*, and *The Pawnshop*. But these pieces are not very skilfully arranged—even though they are each credited to Marcel Marceau—and each contains too many passages of action which do not advance the story or illuminate the characters taking part. Yet, one supposes, it is inevitable that Marceau must now be presented in such a large framework, if he is to be made acceptable to audiences largely unfamiliar with the art of mime. One recalls that he made a marvellous impression when he first burst on us from Paris five years ago, performing almost as much as he does now and assisted by only one "feed", Gilles Segal, who is still with him. He illustrates a whole gallery of characters, who pass through annoyance, happiness, exasperation, regret, embarrassment, and a dozen other states, as they shop, walk in parks or streets, visit cafés, play with babies or dogs, gossip, meet friends or enemies. Marceau is a phenomenon of our time, and to miss his performances is to lose one of the great theatrical experiences that the mid-twentieth century can offer.

INBAL

Drury Lane, 21 October, 1957.

Under this title, a group of Yemenite Jews perform dramatic rituals and peasant-style dances which are a remarkable illustration of the vitality of Jewish society; isolated from the rest of Jewry for over 2,000 years the Yemeni have kept in being the Hebraic system of social, religious and philosophic custom. The surface similarities between their dramas and dances, and those of their non-Jewish neighbours, do not deceive us; their dance-style has as much vigour as that of, say, Poland; as much originality of forms and idioms as that of Russia; and it is a westernised, not an Asiatic, style.

Few other folk dance codes anywhere in the world allow the women to dance on equal terms with the men—with as rich and curious a range of dances—and with a performance style that makes the females in other systems look like insipid imitators of the males.

The big set pieces of the programme are pictures of the Yemeni Jewish way of life, illustrated in the week-long ritual of a wedding, in the narration of the Song of Debora, and in a highly imaginative and dramatically effective version of the meeting of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. All these are accompanied by a good deal of primitive-Hebrew chanting, singing, and general chatter that serve to explain what is going on; the non-Jewish spectator can nevertheless follow these stories through the vivacity and expressiveness of the dancing, gestures and stylised movements.

The dances and dramas contain a good deal of singing, provided by the performers (a tribute to their physique and sense of discipline!), and much of the music is provided by flutes, tambourines and hand-drums; again, it is an odd fact that the drumming is mostly done by the women, whereas in most folk-dance systems the men do the music-making as well as all the important dancing. All this programme has been planned by the company's artistic director, Sara Levi-Tanai, who is also the choreographer. Among a strong cast of dignified, even heroic-looking, characters Margalith Oved stands out dynamically—a veritable Biblical heroine, strong, vital and wildly beautiful. The programme is the sort of rarity that does not often occur and is as fascinating and original a dance show as anything seen here in years.

BALLETS IN OPERAS

AIDA, Covent Garden, 28th October.

SAMSON & DELILAH, Sadler's Wells, 6th November.

Opera singers (and conductors, producers and critics, too) tend to see the ballet element in Opera as a bore; something that gets in the

way of the singing, and holds up the story—operatically speaking. Ballet has, in the past, had to suffer much indignity in its relationship with Opera and it is surprising that opera managements still tolerate it to the extent that they do. No-one would pretend that the opera fans would flame into indignation if all dancing were banished from opera performances. And, to be honest, the dancers themselves and their choreographers don't get much satisfaction out of what they are permitted to do.

The trouble is that, since Ballet began its renaissance half-a-century ago, it has shown developments of the dance-art which have reached to fresh heights of aesthetic achievement; and the kind of ballet that is allowed in an opera is, generally, far from an aesthetic experience. This happens because all except a few contemporary operas require choreography in a deliberately old-fashioned style to fit in with the atmosphere or plot or characterisation of the opera. The choreographer's task is either to make dance arrangements which look similar to what the opera producer thinks he remembers from the previous production of the same opera—or, to create a new-looking kind of choreography which does not look too novel, or does not attract too much audience attention away from the singers. The two operas noted above nicely illustrate modern trends and requirements.

In *Aida* the dance arrangements were by the opera's producer and exactly in mood and style similar to any full-scale production of *Aida* of the past fifty years. The movements and steps were based on "stage Egyptian" (i.e., arms writhing, chins well up, or arms held in stiff downward diagonals with chins pressed down) and, apart from this, a few solo and duet dance figures roughly reminiscent of late-Petipa style.

Samson and Delilah was a much more imaginative job, by Pauline Grant. There is no known historical style on which to model (for an opera on a Biblical theme) and the choreography used much clever circular pattern, some gymnastic display movements for the males, and in general a lot of pleasing ensemble figures resembling the tracks and groupings common to most European folk-dance styles. In both operas, the principal dancer was Gillian Lynne and her smooth technique, splendidly supple figure and appropriately sparse costuming enabled her to give a semblance of authenticity to the dancing character required by the opera's plot. At Covent Garden she was partnered by Alexis Rassine—not particularly helpfully; at Sadler's Wells she formed the centre piece of a group of two men and seven girls who all danced with a precise discipline that might well have been reflected in the stage manoeuvres of the opera's chorus.

THE URALS ENSEMBLE

Drury Lane, 11th November, 1957.

Among many surprises attending the premiere of this troupe was that of discovering that its performance is quite different from that of all previous folk companies from Russia. This difference lay not only in the fact that these people (centred on Sverdlovsk, in the Ural Mountain region) have many local dance- and song-idioms to work with, but that their approach is, simply, to create an evening's entertainment. They are not very much concerned to persuade us that Russian folk art is richer, or more "folksy", or more dynamic, etc., than the folk art of other nations; they perform a collection of songs, dances, scenes of village life, mimed stories about gossips, boasters, animals, village maidens, love-making—all with the aim of pleasing their audience. Not only are the performers full of vitality, but their programme is, also.

Apart from one serious and one dramatic song (both by mixed voices), the rest was all concerned with life, love and laughter. One felt that they were not taking themselves too seriously—though they were paying us a well-intentioned compliment—when they started the evening with our National Anthem in English and later gave us *Three Blind Mice* in English, and a mixed Russian-English interpretation of that piece of West Riding 19th century folk-lore *On Ilkla Moor baht 'At*.

When an eightsome group came out in stylised Scottish costume of the 18th century, and performed a fairly close copy of a reel, we knew that the performers were as delighted as we were by the light-hearted impudence of the gesture. The comic songs were excellent (surely no other system of folk-lore has quite so many good singing jokes in its repertoire?), and the male dancing used more tricks of dancing with bent knees, balancing on the hands, flying turns, etc., than any other Russian group has shown before.

The programme emphasised the rich, varied, and vital male dancing; the masterly use of the accordion as a dance instrument; the lovely lyricism of the best of the women's songs; and added up to one of the most friendly gestures that the Russians have made, by way of a theatrical company, in the whole post-war period.

Continued on page 19.

A. V. COTON



Panchita de Péri of the Ballet de Lage Landen
Photo: Bill Farley.

MOSCOW

A few weeks ago I sat in the office of Dr. Chulaki, Director of the Bolshoi Theatre, and looked out of the window at the crowds in the Moscow city streets as he talked to me about Ulanova. "Galina," he said, "does not dance very often now. You are very lucky to see her *Giselle* and *Romeo and Juliet* in ten days." He had been telling me something of the changes he had seen in ballet in the Soviet Union during the twenty years he has been closely connected with the Bolshoi; when he was a young composer and wrote his first ballet, he told me, the tradition was a purely lyrical one. A ballet was conceived in much the same way as Grand Opera—as a vehicle for a soloist who would dance as often as she could and rest in the wings while the corps de ballet took over, much in the same way as the Grandest of Grand Operas was a sequence of arias alternating with crowd scenes. For duet read pas de deux, for trio read pas de trois. All the efforts of the "crowd" went into perpetuating the lyrical atmosphere of the prima's appearances on the stage; they had no role of their own, they were just a crowd. But, Dr. Chulaki said, ballet "progresses" too. In the twenties and thirties more new ballets were written than at any time in the past, and composers and choreographers went outside the narrow compound full of woodcutters, their daughters, Ruritanian kings and their sons and looked for new themes in the seventeenth, eighteenth, even nineteenth and twentieth century theatre. Shakespeare found a home in ballet—*Romeo and Juliet* being the best known of his plays to be produced at the Bolshoi, but only one of fourteen written into a new form. And with the advent of the subject of some of the greatest theatrical drama came something of the atmosphere of the theatre too; the lyrical tradition gave way to a "lyrical dramatic tradition" and lyrical drama to a new sense of pure drama in the dance.

News of Dancers Around the World

More people crept onto the stage and had something to do of their own; the pas de deux and trois became more infrequent, and the solo dances rarer. A whole new ballet tradition was establishing itself in the minds of the younger composers and choreographers when Chulaki came to the Bolshoi, when Ulanova first started to dance at the top.

I went to the Mayaakovski theatre where Galina Ulanova herself was judging a folk dance competition; like most other ballerinas in the Soviet Union she gives a great deal of her time to activities associated one way or another with the dance, offstage—but relevant activities as opposed to the ceremonial opening of garden parties. She came out of a lounge, moving in the curiously birdlike way which contrasts so vividly with her unparalleled grace onstage; her hair was scraped back off her forehead and she was dressed unfashionably in a simple day dress (an indeterminate grey). When I asked her about the new dramatic, crowded ballet she told me that she grew up in the lyrical tradition and though she hoped she was an adequate actress (a classic understatement) she could not alter her style to suit changing fashion; she thought change and innovation a good thing—up to a point—but she had danced all her life in what she called the "pure ballet" (as opposed to the theatrical trend in contemporary ballet) and she gave me tea and sent me off to see the ballet school, to talk with Madame Gert.

Gert is the Senior ballet teacher at the Bolshoi school and has seen all the changes Chulaki outlined, from the four walls of the school. She said she hadn't noticed any change as clearcut as Chulaki had implied. But she agreed that many of the present day pupils were concentrating more on "acting a part" rather than dancing a series of thinly consequential attitudes. Maria Garotskaya, her favourite pupil, who had just graduated to the full Company, told me she would be quite satisfied with the "unconscious drama" of Ulanova in *Romeo and Juliet*, but she did stress her interest in the "new theatre of the dance"—and felt that she was typical of her generation.

A little depressed at the thought that perhaps Ulanova was the last of the purely lyrical dancers I went into the practice rooms—and there I saw the most incredibly beautiful woman I have ever seen in my life. I say "woman," though the young ballet pupil Maximova is only sixteen, because her dancing showed such an understanding of emotions she could never have experienced that I felt that in some magical way she had achieved maturity more easily and more completely than those of us who pride ourselves on leading a "full life" could ever do. I watched her dance—she has over a year to do in

school before she joins the Company, though she has won this year the Gold Medal usually reserved for older "qualified" ballerinas—and I remembered something Ulanova had said at tea, almost under her breath, that "beauty is in itself dramatic." And here I would hazard a guess that the pure lyricism of Ulanova and before is as safe as it ever was from what I would call the inroads of noisy mime; and calling up an image, vision, of Maximova that she will come here one day and be acclaimed as the greatest of them all.

ROY MACGREGOR-HASTIE.

HOLLAND

Most important event in Holland since the long summer vacuum has undoubtedly been a lecture, delivered under the auspices of the American Embassy in the Hague, by Leonide Massine. Massine spoke—in faultless English—on Ballet in America and covered the subject fully since the seventeenth century. Most interesting were his comments on present-day choreographers, most of whom he summed up in a pithy sentence, and paying particular homage to Fokine, whom he described as "the greatest of all in this century." His views on choreography should be taken to heart by many young choreographers, for he holds the opinion that the only aim of a choreographer should be to attempt to do something new: the audience was left wondering whether any choreographer working in Holland will follow up his suggestion of a ballet based on the paintings of Jan Steen or Ostade.

The first new work of the current season was given by the Ballet de Lage Landen, *Variatione con Maschera*, by the Englishman Denis Carey, who has spent the past two years working in South America, and who, on the basis of this neat little study in the contrasting styles of classical and modern dance, is yet another choreographer to whom English ballet should be eager to offer opportunities, but prefers to leave on the Continent (though Mr. Carey is, in fact, anxious to work in the States). Most notable among the cast of eight was the young Belgian Panchita de Péri, whose beautiful arabesque is a valuable asset to the company. In the same performance was shown Walter Gore's brilliant re-working of *Casse Noisette*, marred almost irrevocably by being given in two acts instead of one, and suffering badly from changes in cast, notably by the loss of Marten Molema and Greetje Donker in Act 1. Milly Emmer, now returned to the company after three years with the Netherlands Ballet, made a most impressive Snow Queen: this dancer has a nobility of style and movement ideally suited to this role. While I must confess to an inevitable prejudice regarding the role of the Nutcracker Prince, I must say that Philip Kaesen seemed totally inadequate, for his dancing is not really dancing as yet, but merely the stringing together of a series of steps, and his characterisation was non-existent. The delightful performance of Lieke de Leeuw as Clara also suffered, for it must be hard even for an experienced dancer to portray awe, wonder and admiration for a magical apparition while dancing with the familiar figure of one's brother-in-law. Best dancing of the evening, besides that of Milly Emmer mentioned above, came from Clazina Nepveu as one of the mechanical dolls in Act 1, from Ansje van Opstal as a Snowflake, and from Wim Bender as Franz—or Frits, as this production persists in designating him.

JANET SINCLAIR.

AUSTRALIA

One of the first photographs of Elaine Fifield since she left the Royal Ballet to join the Borovansky Company in Australia. Seen right with Kenneth Melville in *Nutcracker*, staged by Lichine. Writing from Brisbane, Kenneth tells me that they are dancing the full length *Swan Lake*, *Giselle*, *Nutcracker*, *Les Sylphides* and *Pineapple Poll* together, and that they have had a very good season both in Brisbane and Melbourne. Their season in Sydney opened with *Swan Lake* in November, and, says Kenneth, they are very excited about that as Sydney is Elaine's home town and it was the first time she had danced there. There is to be a production of Lifar's *Noir et Blanc* staged by Robert Powie, a French dancer with the Company.

Photo: Helmut Newton

Gertrud Bodenwieser recently choreographed Menotti's ballet, *Errand into the Maze*, and presented it for the first time to an Australian audience.

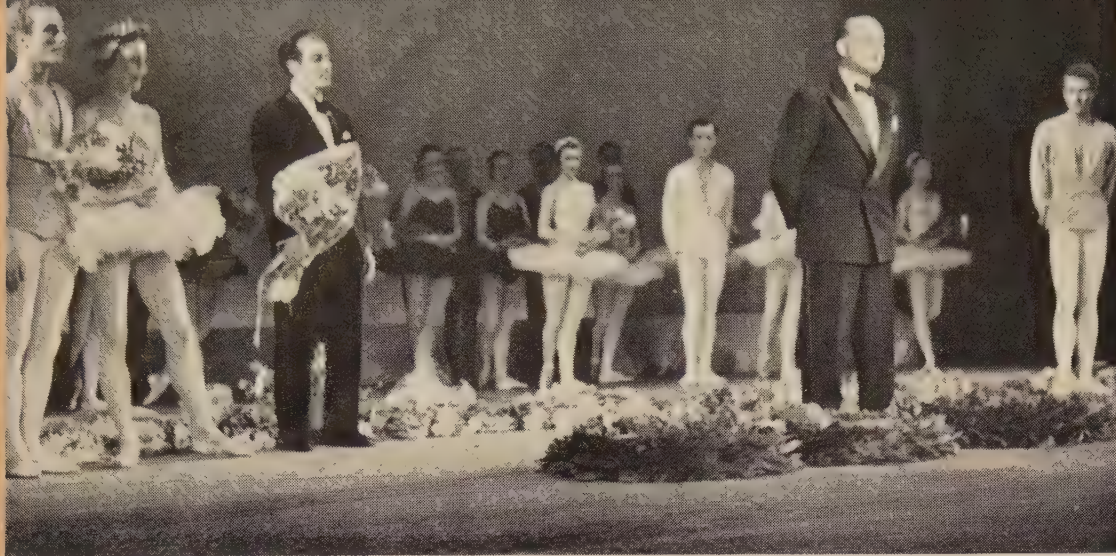
The ballet depicts the chaos of the modern world, and man's inability to extricate himself.

When Hitler came to power Gertrud Bodenwieser left Austria, where she was the first Professor in charge of the Modern Dance Department of the Vienna State Academy for Music and Dramatic Arts, and went to Australia where she opened a school in Sydney and formed the first professional modern group, the Bodenwieser Ballet. Today the school has one hundred and fifty students, and Madame Bodenwieser is also a visiting teacher to different colleges and other Government institutions.

Coralie Hinkley, seen below with Bruno Harvey is a Bodenwieser pupil and has been awarded the Fulbright Scholarship for America, an honour very rarely accorded especially to Modern dance.

Eileen Cramer's London debut will be reviewed in our next issue.





DENMARK



ITALY

4

TURKEY



7

AMERICA



8



FESTIVAL BAL

The early part of 1957 saw all of London or on English tours, but at a general exodus commenced with leaving for a highly successful tour to Norway, Denmark, Germany, Holland and Switzerland.

Photo No. 1. Harald Lander making a first night audience, which included the Mr. H. C. Hansen

Photo No. 5. Belinda Wright and Giselle in Paris. The Company had Photo: Vato

ALICIA MARKOVA

Alicia Markova, the most inveterate finished a season in London in *When* left for Brussels, Wiesbaden, and Later in the year she danced at Anniversary of Jacob's Pillow in I. Pilar Lopez Company in Madrid, the Queen at the Royal Command and closed 1957 with a season at the House, New York.

Photo No. 3. At rehearsal in the ball at Nervi, Genoa. Photo: Lido

With our dance

NADIA NERINA

In April Nadia Nerina and Alexander to dance in Ankara during British supported by the Turkish National stay were guests of the British Ambassador Photo No. 4. In *The Dying Swan*, Turkey. Photo: Houston Rogers

BERYL GREY

Beryl Grey left the Royal Ballet in embarked on a tour of South America Oleg Briensky as her partner. reception and appeared in Uruguay, Brazil, Honduras, Guatemala and a tour of South Africa and Rhodesia Beryl dances at the Bolshoi in Moscow cities.

Photo No. 6. Beryl Grey and Oleg Santiago Airport, Chile

THE ROYAL BAL

The Royal Ballet flew out to New the first of two visits to the U.S. television performance of *Cinderella* Photo No. 7. Left to right: Svetlana Fonteyn, Julia Farron and Elaine F

In May Beriosova, Farron and Prince of the Pagodas in Milan.

In the same month, Margot Fonteyn, Rowena Jackson and Bryan Ashbourn and Melbourne, Australia.

Photo No. 10. Fonteyn and Some Empire Theatre, Sydney

Rowena Jackson and Bryan Ashbourn tour New Zealand in July.

In September the whole of the Ballet left for a five months tour of Photo No. 8. The newlyweds Maryon are seen dancing together at Sol Huxley Company on its opening night in New Melancon

The Royal Ballet (formerly Sadler's also managed to do some foreign tour schedule for the English provinces month in Barcelona and visited on went on to Germany, Switzerland and Photo No. 9. A favourite ballet Patineurs. Photo: Denis De Marre

BALLET RAMBL

Also in September, the Ballet in where they opened in Peking at Nanking, Shanghai, Hankow and British Ballet Company to tour China Photo No. 2. The Chinese audience Conductor David Ellenberg joins them in turn applaud their appreciation

I hope this feature has conveyed the done and the long wearying journey undertaken during the year 1957. the n all, and may 1958 give them e to make known their art through

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Maria Fris

Backstage at the Stoll Theatre London, during the Janine Charrat Season

Photo: Mike Davis.

MEET OUR DANCERS

A SERIES BY WELL KNOWN
WRITERS ON THE DANCE

GERMANY

BY

Dr. Wilfried Hofman

MARIA FRIS

MEET a tiny dancer with an extraordinary personality, a girl who has to buy her clothes in a children's garments store and at the same time is Germany's most mature lyrical ballerina—that is Maria Fris.

Maria has been dancing ever since she can remember. She received her decisive training in her native city, Berlin, with Tatjana Gsovsky. These classes later got a finishing touch at Piretti's and Volinine's Paris studios. At the age of 16, without ever dancing with the group, Maria emerged right away as a soloist at the Berlin Municipal Opera. It was here she met her partners Peter van Dyk and Rainer Köchermann—the latter becoming her inseparable partner.

Maria is full of vitality. You wouldn't believe it if you saw her pale, almost transparent complexion and her pure lyrical style of dancing. Nor do the ballet masters seem to believe in it! So again and again she is restrained to those roles which she does not like best, but which she is best in—romantic and poetical roles. Only one of these roles she has never been assigned—Odette-Odile. With her 4 ft. 9 inches she doubts if she could give the majestic picture of a queen! In Berlin and with van Dyk we have seen her as Dulcinea in *Don Quixote*, Lilac Fairy and Rotkäppchen in *The Sleeping Princess*, in *La Valse*, *Pelléas and Mélisande*, Henze's *Symphony* and Klebe's *Pas de Trois*. However, if she was to assign her own roles she would rather pick those which gave her a chance to dance Jazz steps and grotesque ones. Indeed, as Pimpinella she is a great success.

Before going to Frankfurt where under Walter Gore she is now ballerina, Maria spent two years with Janine Charrat's company touring all over Europe and in Africa. With Charrat she had her first character role—the part of an insane girl in *Les Alges*—which she danced in London. Also she was in *Spectre de la Rose*, *Pas de Quatre*, *L'Oiseau bleu*, *Don Quixote* *Pas de deux*, and in her favourite part—Charrat's *Pas de Deux*. Maria is one of those few who live right next to joy and sorrow. That is why she'd like to be an artist like Charlie Chaplin if she was a man. Being sensitive, full of musicality, ethereal and elegant she is a true artist at heart and far beyond the mentality of a technician. Maybe that is why Picasso took to her and had her portrait taken by his wife. This is, too, why she simply must express herself creatively.

Already—together with Köchermann—she has choreographed her first little dance scenes—a *pas de deux* on *Ballade* (Brahms) and *Stellidichein* (Prokofiev).

RAINER KÖCHERMANN

ACTUALLY Rainer wanted to become an architect. Instead of which he won a German championship in ice skating at the age of 13. This event made him decide to take ballet classes since he wanted to defend his championship even more successfully. But instead he became together with Peter van Dyk, Heino Hallhuber and Gert Reinholm, among the finest German classical dancers of today.

Rainer is very proud of having had both a classical and a modern education. In Dresden he studied with Mary Wigman, in Berlin with Tatjana Gsovsky and Paris with Mme. Rossane, Victore Gsovsky and Piretti. It was in Berlin, too, where Rainer got started, and—where he met Maria Fris. Ever since (with a short interlude) Rainer and Maria have been partners. Their partnership has become so popular and successful that neither they nor any manager would consider to hire only one of them. Singly, these fine dancers are, and feel, almost incomplete! So we saw them in *Don Quixote*, *L'Oiseau bleu* *pas de deux* and in *Prometheus*, *La Boutique Fantasque*, *La Valse*, *Bolero*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Scènes de Ballet*, *L'Indifférent*, *Firebird*, *Hamlet* and *Lusistrata*.

Rainer is an extraordinarily handsome boy, and his personality is just as pleasant: sincere, self-assured, gentle and unassuming. On the stage he surprises through his vivid mimical talent.

Talking about his hobbies Maria Fris gets kind of uneasy and tries to contradict her friend. She claims that his major hobby is going to a movie theatre to "sit and look and look and sit". He, however, claims to have hobbies far more elegant: music and literature (Exupéry, Kafka). Since Maria is—as Rainer puts it—his only and genuine talisman we wonder whom we should believe. In fact, Rainer is very fond of Ravel, Debussy, Schönberg and Kenton. He dislikes Wagner, though, and in that respect he is uniform with the whole younger generation in Germany. His great appreciation of music is closely related to his work as a choreographer. Rainer never



Rainer Köchermann in *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

Photo: S. Enkelmann.

has been satisfied with roles allotted to him. He always gave his choreographers a hard time by suggesting his own ideas. Only Walter Gore by his great personality has checked him so far! And already Rainer has turned out a few pleasant pieces of choreography—of course for Maria Fris and himself! Touring Berlin this spring they were tremendously successful with their own creations. In his choreographic experiments, Rainer, of course, admittedly draws on his old Wigman schooling. It is no risk to predict that Rainer will make a lot of headway still. This is clear if you know both his rational mentality, his great sense of self-discipline and his natural talent for the art of dance. You wonder whom you like more: the boy on or off-stage!

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Gift

SUGGESTIONS



Artists Prints of Dance Subjects

THERE are numerous good artists' prints of dance subjects now available which are even better than photographs and make very popular presents. In my own collection are many fine colour prints; they begin with the oldest art works of this particular kind—the famous Japanese colour woodcuts, mostly depicting scenes and actor-dancers in the *No Dance* of Nippon. In their standard size of fourteen by ten inches, they supplied the fans of 1830, in Tokio, with their mass-produced “pin-up pictures” of topical favourites. Reproductions can be purchased, though original prints are now more rare and more expensive.

From the Metropolitan Museum in New York came a wonderful reproduction of one of their treasures, a Degas painting of a ballet school. This collotype print, indistinguishable under glass from the original work, costs \$5.0. From the British Museum I obtained an interesting print, from a copy of one of the Buddhist paintings in the Ajanta Caves in India.

More easily obtainable are a number of excellent colour prints, issued by the Medici Press, The Pallas Gallery, and the Print Society, at quite reasonable prices. Subjects range from the famous Botticelli

picture *Primavera*, to two ancient mural designs of *Etruscan Dancer*, and *Etruscan Piper*. Cheapest of all such reproductions are the post-cards, done in three-colour or four-colour half-tone process—as low as sixpence each. Much better are prints made by offset-lithographic or collotype process, more like originals in appearance.

There is a range of eight Degas paintings; all of ballet subjects, based on his studies at Paris Opera and other schools in the French capital. Coming to paintings of this century, we find attractive works by Laura Knight, Doris Zinkeisen, and Carlotta Edwards. These prints are mostly of good size—16 in. × 20 in. or even 24 in. × 30 in. (*Sylphide* picture) and the cost ranges (unframed) from 12/6 to 42/- (These prices do not include purchase tax).

Overseas buyers are not stung like native Britons, for “purchase tax” and can buy at these prices, plus carriage. They can also purchase—from the Print Society which specialises in this service—the frames, ready cut and mitred, to fit together. Only glass is then required. The larger prints cost about £4-£5 framed complete.

W. G. RAFFE.

Photographs on this page:—

Top left:

The Dancing Class by Degas, ref. P. available in colour in two sizes: 8 × 10½ in., price 6/6d., including purchase tax. 27¼ × 24¼ in., price £4 1s. 11d., including purchase tax (packing and postage for the small size 1/3d. and for the large size 4/6d. should be added to these prices). A prospectus of small size prints can be obtained free of charge on application.

Top right:

Margot Fonteyn in *Swan Lake* by Carlotta Edwards, ref. M.A.S. 969, size 24 × 30 in., Colour Offset Lithography, price 54/-, including purchase tax, postage 2/9d. (1/3d. returnable if you send back the cylinder).

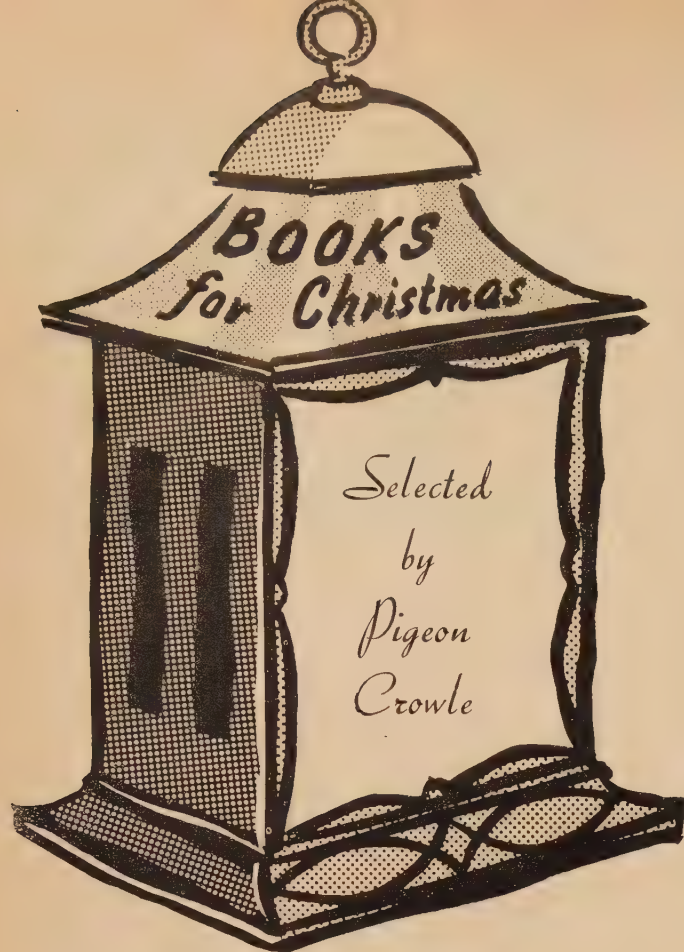
Bottom right:

Festival Ballet in Act 2 of *Giselle*, with Natalie Krassovska as Giselle, Anton Dolin as Albrecht, in colour, from painting by Carlotta Edwards. In three sizes: approx. 6 × 4 in., 1/-; 10 × 6½ in., 3/-; and 15 × 10 in., 6/6d. (which includes postage and purchase tax). These prints can be made up into Christmas cards, calendars or framed. This series is obtainable only from *Ballet Today* office.

Prices quoted above do not include frames.

All enquiries must be accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope.





"WHAT shall I give this Christmas?" is the question that will soon be acquiring a note of urgency for many of us. If you number ballet-lovers among your friends, the answer is quite simple because, though the year has not been quite as prolific as usual, there are books on the ballet to suit all tastes and pockets. Here are a few suggestions that may help you in your choice.

Beginning with the younger generation, *Second Steps in Ballet* is an excellent little book for the child who has already begun ballet lessons. It will help him or her to make the best of what is learnt in class, for the text and drawings are unusually clear and often amusing; while teenagers will enjoy *The Little Dancer*, Lorna Hill's story of a ballet student, with its delightful picture of Christmas in a small Border Village.

The following reasonably priced books are full of excellent photographic illustrations and will suit readers of all ages: *The Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet*, an account of the work of the second company during the last ten years; *Svetlana Beriosova*, a short biographical sketch of that lovely ballerina; and *Six Dancers of Sadler's Wells*, which is a tribute to Julia Farron, Leslie Edwards, Rosemary Lindsay, Alexander Grant, Elaine Fifield, and David Blair, who have all made important contributions to the Royal Ballet. Two very inexpensive books which cannot fail to please are *Markova and Dolin*, a graceful tribute to these two great dancers with many attractive photographs both on stage and off; and the *Penguin Dictionary of Ballet* (to be reviewed next month). In *My Years with Pavlova*, the English dancer, Algeranoff, gives a lively account of the life of a touring company which, with its glimpses of the last ten years of Pavlova's life, will interest most people.

One of the important books of the year is *Come Dance With Me* (to be reviewed next month), the memoirs of Ninette de Valois, in which she describes her early youth and the creation of our National Ballet; while in *Fanny Cerrito*, Ivor Guest gives the first full account of the life and career of this famous ballerina of the Romantic Period. It is exceptionally well-illustrated. No one would fail to give a gasp of pleasure if he received Lido's magnificent collection of photographs on Christmas morning (to be reviewed next month). My last choice is the reprint of *Birth of Ballets-Russes*. First published in 1936, it is an account of the creation and development of Russian ballet, as we know it in Western Europe, by one who saw it all and who was the intimate friend of most of the people concerned, from Diaghilev's circle to the baby ballerinas of de Basil's Company. A book to cherish.

I wish all my readers a very happy Christmas, and pleasant reading.

P.C.

For Your Christmas Book List

- Second Steps in Ballet, by Thalia Mara (Constable, 8s. 6d.).
- The Little Dancer, by Lorna Hill (Nelson, 12s. 6d.).
- The Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, Ed. Hugh Fisher (Black, 12s. 6d.).
- Svetlana Beriosova, by Cyril Swinson (Black, 6s. 6d.).
- Six Dancers of Today, by Cyril Swinson (Black, 6s. 6d.).
- A Dictionary of Ballet, by G. B. L. Wilson (Penguin, 5s.).
- Markova and Dolin, by George Hall (Hall Publications, 5s.).
- My Years with Pavlova, by Algeranoff (Heinemann, 25s.).
- Come Dance with Me, by Ninette de Valois (Hamish Hamilton, 25s.).
- Fanny Cerrito, by Ivor Guest (Phoenix House, 30s.).
- Ballet 7, by Serge Lido (Black, 42s.).
- Birth of Ballets-Russes, by Prince Lieven (Allen & Unwin, 30s.).

Ed. note:

Miss Crowle has modestly left out her own publication (reviewed last month) Come to the Ballet, by Pigeon Crowle (Faber & Faber, 15s.).

At this time of the year we get a spate of new books. As many of them arrive about the time of going to press it is not possible to review them all. This year therefore I have decided to leave over all reviews of new books until our next issue, but to print below all publications received up to the time of going to press. Miss Crowle's selection above will remind you of books published throughout the year. If none of these find their way into your Christmas stocking then you can read the reviews in our next issue and choose your own, or expend your book tokens received as gifts. Editor.

Books received and to be reviewed next issue:

Rhythm in the Heavens, by Ram Gopal (Secker & Warburg) 25s.

The Ballet Annual, 1958 (A. & C. Black) 25s.

Margot Fonteyn (Souvenir of the Australian Tour) (Angus & Robertson) 3s. 6d.

Robert Helpmann, by Kathrine Sorley Walker (Rockliff) 15s.

Mike Davis looks at Festival Ballet (C. P. Enterprises, Ltd.) 7s. 6d.

Principal Rôle, by Lorna Hill (Evans Bros.) 10s. 6d.

Fonteyn, by James Monahan (A. & C. Black) 18s.

Victorian Ballet Girl, by Ivor Guest (A. & C. Black) 21s.

Nadia Nerina, by Cyril Swinson (A. & C. Black) 7s. 6d.

John Gilpin, by Cyril Swinson (A. & C. Black) 7s. 6d.

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ROYAL ALBERT HALL: Sunday, 5th January, 1958 at 3 p.m. Tickets from Box Office, 3/6, 6/–, 7/6, 10/6, 12/6, 15/–.

MANCHESTER: Free Trade Hall, 6th and 7th January, 7.30. Tickets: A. T. Fay, Esq., 31, Stephens Road, Manchester, 20. DID. 6824, 21/–, 10/6, 7/6, 5/–, 3/6, 2/6.

LIVERPOOL: The Stadium, 8th January, 7.30 p.m. Tickets: Miss V. Carroll, 23, Whinmoor Road, Liverpool, 12 (STO. 2414), 10/–, 6/6, 4/–, 2/6.

FOR so many of us, a gramophone record is a much appreciated Christmas present and each time it is played we are reminded of the giver. With the advent of the L.P., the task of selecting the right one has been made comparatively simple as the range is now so wide. So besides commenting on some recent issues, I thought I would remind you of a few of the best I have reviewed this year.

THE BEECHAM TOUCH

A part of Sibelius' music for *Pelléas et Mélisande* was used by Gore in his gripping ballet, *Confessional*, which only a dancer such as Sally Gilmour could put over. It takes Sir Thomas to put into this music the magic we find on H.M.V. ALP1480, and the even greater magic in the same composer's *Seventh Symphony* and tone poem, *The Oceanides*—a great record. I must also recommend Sir Thomas' treatment of the two suites from Bizet's *L'Arlésienne* on H.M.V. ALP1497, as well as his superb performance of Balakirev's *First Symphony*, Columbia 33CX1450, for those who enjoy Russian music. But of course performances of this calibre are to be expected from the world's greatest conductor.

THE NUTCRACKER

If all you want is the usual suite from this ballet of pure delight, a new production of which Festival Ballet are putting on this Christmas, then Beecham's version, Philips SBR6213, apart from being a bargain, is definitely the most rewarding. In fact it makes Toscanini's, H.M.V. ALP1441, sound almost dull. However you must seriously consider the two Mercury discs, MRL2508-9, of the complete ballet. I have had so much pleasure from them and am now even more conscious of how much exquisite music there is in the score, which we too rarely hear. Both Dorati's conducting and the recording are first class—certainly a major addition to any gramophone library.

COPPELIA

Our thanks are due to the recording companies for the number of complete ballet scores that are being recorded nowadays. Here is another from Decca, *Coppélia* with Ansermet and the Suisse Romande Orchestra, LXT5342-3. This veteran ballet conductor gives so fine an account of Delibes' music that I feel ungrateful if I say there are passages where I would like a little more sparkle. I hope there are few, if any, ballet-goers who have not yet acquired Decca's near-complete *Prince of the Pagodas*, LXT5336-7. At each playing, one's deeper interest increases as well as one's simple enjoyment. To me, there is no question about it—it is a must.

CHRISTMAS PIE

There are many good plums to be pulled out, such as the music of the early days of ballet at the French Court—the music of Lully and his contemporaries, Fischer and Muffat, on Oiseau-Lyre OL50136, and of Lalande on OL50152. What a picture one of the titles conjures up—*Concert de Trompettes pour les Festes sur le Canal de Versailles*! At least one record of this period should be in every ballet collection.

Then there is Haydn's *Farewell Symphony*, as a reminder of de Valois' *Promenade*, on Decca LXT5312 which is a "live" recording of the Aldeburgh Festival Orchestra under Britten. It has, therefore, its own particular interest for those who attended the Festival though the recorded applause may be found irritating. The coupling is Haydn's *Schoolmaster*. Two more Haydn Symphonies, *The Clock* and No. 102, are conducted by Markevitch on Columbia 33CX1458. He is very successful with the latter but the tempo of *The Clock*—Massine's ballet for the Royal Ballet—is rather too hurried.

Alicia Alonso's very first ballet, *Ensago Sinfonica*, was set to

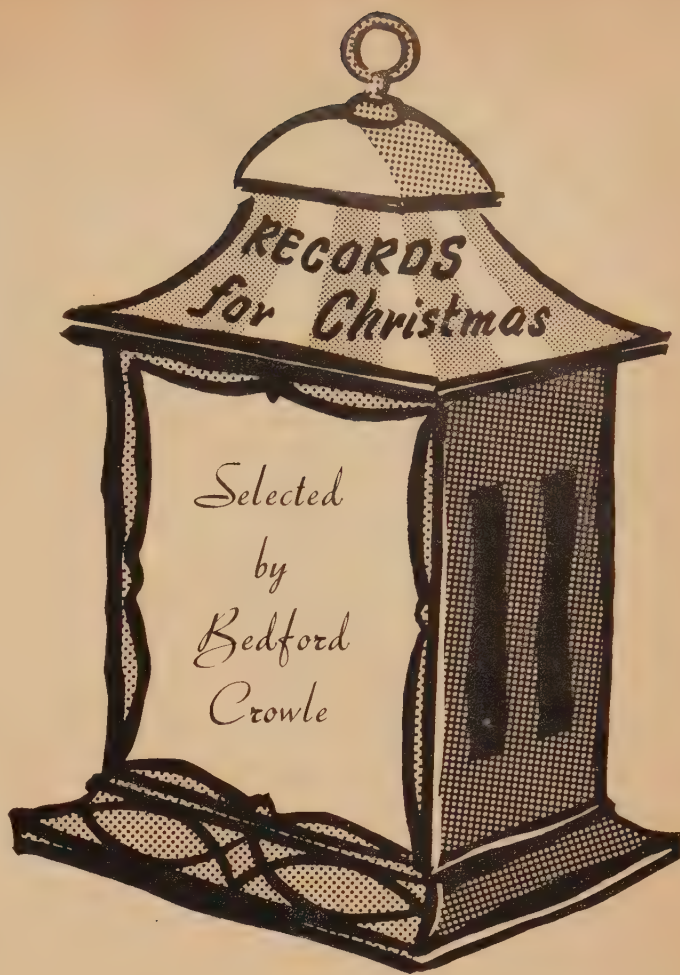
LONDON REVIEWS—Continued from Page 9

COPPELIA—B.B.C. Television Production 29th October, 1957.

On Sunday, October 29th the B.B.C. gave us a pleasant surprise by devoting nearly an hour to a condensed version of *Coppélia*. It was obvious that Margaret Dale put a lot of work into her adaptation (which included quite a lot of new choreography) and clearly no expense had been spared in obtaining the best available artists: the soloists included Nadia Nerina as Swanilda, Robert Helpmann as Dr. Coppélius, and Donald Britton as Franz, and the corps de ballet included such distinguished artists as Julia Farron, Gerd Larson, Gillian Lynne, Tutte Lemkov and Peter Wright.

Nadia Nerina danced with brilliance and showed an elevation quite as remarkable as that of any of the Bolshoi ballerinas; unfortunately her acting was much less impressive, for in fact the production gave her little chance to show Swanilda's sense of humour. Helpmann made the most of his limited acting opportunities and was effectively sinister in the introduction in a rather Caligari-like way. Donald Britton was given almost no chance to show his remarkable talents; Margaret Dale would have been well advised to transfer to Act 1 Franz's excellent Act 3 solo rather than arrange for him some unimpressive movements with a chair.

Though the adaptation has many merits—some of the dancing in the Czardas was well arranged—it suffered from lack of balance. Too much time was given to rather dull mime scenes particularly at the beginning when Franz and Swanilda are trying to attract the attention of the doll, and this left no time at the end for any of Act 3. As a result the production ended very abruptly. Swanilda disclosed that



Brahms' *Haydn Variations* and I doubt if Karajan's performance, Columbia 33CX1349, can be bettered. The finest version of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* is on the reverse side. To lovers of Grieg, I recommend Vox PL9840 reviewed last July and Susskind's latest recording of the *Peer Gynt* suites and *Norwegian Dances*, Columbia 33SX1057, while the Lisztians have Bela Siki's fine playing of three Sonetti del Petrarca and *d'Après une Lecture de Dante*, Columbia 33CX1416. The latter, Lambert orchestrated for *Dante Sonata*, which was one of Ashton's major successes.

And last but by no means least, as I wish all my readers a very happy Christmas, there is Philips' beautiful and only complete recording of César Franck's *Psyche*, ABL3114—Babilée's ballet, *L'Amour et son Amour*, reviewed last January. It has the serenity that this turbulent world needs.

she was not the doll and went off with Franz; suddenly the ballet finished with Dr. Coppélius standing despondently over the doll.

Though this production had a number of faults, it was more ambitious than any production of television ballet for a long time, and probably introduced a great many people to this delightful ballet. It is to be hoped that the B.B.C. will continue in this path, and give us ballet rather more frequently than in the past. HELEN ROSS.

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Edited by ARNOLD L. HASKELL

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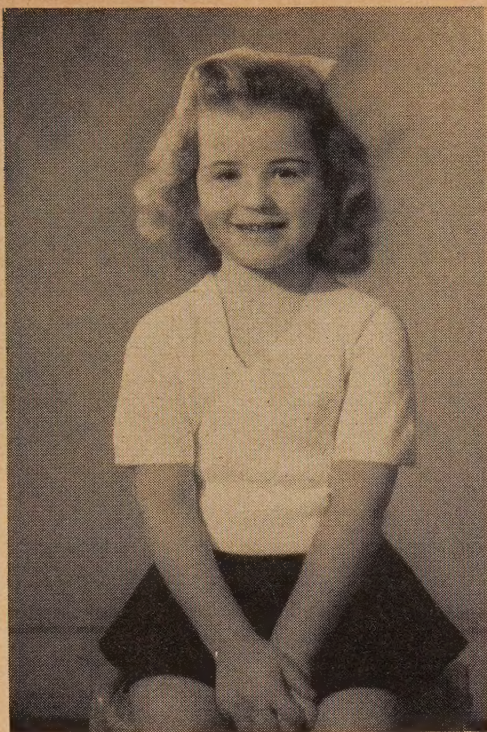
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HUGMETIGHT KNITTING INSTRUCTIONS

Back

5 or 6 oz. wool. One pair of No. 8 needles. (For smaller sizes use smaller needles.)

94 sts. Knit into backs of sts. 6 rows of single rib. Then stocking st. for 9 ins. up to armhole. Cast off 12 sts. each side. Knit st. st. for 6 ins. up to neck. Cast off remaining sts. all at once.

Right Front

89 sts. Knit into backs of sts. 5 rows single rib.

1st row rib 6 k. to end of row.

2nd row Purl to last 6 sts. rib 6.

3rd row rib 6 knit 2 tog. k. to end of row.

4th row. Purl to last 6 sts.

*Continue 3rd and 4th rows until there are 8 sts. after the armhole sts. have been taken off. When the side measures 9 ins. Cast off 6 sts. the 1st row, then 3 the 2nd row, then k. 2 tog. alternately 3 times, taking off 12 sts. altogether, then work the side edge straight from now on. Continue decreasing inside the rib until there are 28 sts. Then work on till it measures 7 ins. from armhole. To shape shoulder cast off 8 sts. 1st row, 7 sts. 2nd row and 3rd row. Continue to rib the 6 rib sts. for 20 rows. Cast off.

Left Front

89 sts. k. into backs of sts. 5 rows single rib.

1st row k. to last 6 sts. rib 6.

2nd row rib 6 purl to end of row.

3rd row k. to last 8 sts. k. 2 tog. rib 6.

4th row, rib 6 purl to end of row. Then reverse the right front from *.

Sleeves

Both alike. 60 sts. k. into backs of sts. 6 rows single rib.

1st row k. plain increasing 1 st. at every 4th st. making 75 sts.

2nd row purl.

Continue with sts. for 4½ ins. Then decrease 2 st. at the beginning of every row till there are 30 sts. left. Cast off.

Work another sleeve in the same manner.

Cast on 6 sts. work into backs of sts. work in single rib for about 15-16 ins. or length required. Work two pieces and sew them to points on the two sides. Join two pieces of ribbing on the fronts together and stitch to the back at back of neck.

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BOOKS

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LETTERS FROM READERS

NEW ZEALAND from Lois Ballantyne, Hon. Treasurer of Gisborne Ballet Group.

Each month I read your magazine with great interest, as I find it the only one available in N.Z. which gives news of Ballet throughout all countries in the world, which previously have not been covered by other Ballet Magazines. To us in N.Z. who have been so long starved for Ballet, this gives us great joy, and we find your magazine most enlightening and enjoyable on the subject in general.

LANCASHIRE, ENGLAND from Miss Peggy Talbot.

I may say how much I enjoy this magazine, being keenly interested in ballet (from the audience) I live in an area where we have little chance of seeing a ballet performance, and apart from an occasional never-to-be-forgotten visit to Covent Garden (about once in 2 years) to see the Sadler's Wells Ballet Company. *Ballet Today* keeps up the interest, and helps me to follow the careers and events relating to those wonderful dancers I have had the privilege of seeing dance.

CANADA from Heino Heiden (dancer, choreographer, whose weekly programme on T.V., CBMT was pictured on page 23 last issue).

Two weeks ago I came back from New York, I was so happy to see your magazine on the newspaper stands. Now you see *Ballet Today* in all the main capitals of the world. My congratulations.

VIENNA from Christl Zimmerl ballerina at the Vienna Staatsoper.

Thank you for publishing the critique of *The Moor of Venice*. I have gained new friends from it, as I even received letters of admiration from Washington and South Africa.

CANADA from Tomás Sleven.

It has been my pleasure to read the articles of Boris Kniasev "In the Footsteps of Olga Spessivtseva" which have been appearing in *Ballet Today* magazine.

In these few lines I wish to express my sincere thanks to you as it is only through these articles, as well as some paintings, photographs, etc., that I have really been able to feel the beautiful soul of Olga Spessivtseva.

I am a young dancer 20 years of age. It would give me great joy to see in these days a danseuse with even a little of the purity and spirituality that Spessivtseva must have possessed. . . . It seems to me that the spirit of Terpsichore flew away with Olga Spessivtseva.

Again I thank you for the pleasure that you have given to me, and I am looking forward to reading more of your writings in the near future.

PARIS from Jacqueline Masart.

Just to say how much I enjoy reading your magazine in Paris. I am glad to see you write something on male dancers as they seem so ignored in your country, unlike here where they have equal success, if not more, with the press.

I hope to see in your *Men in Ballet* series an article on Alexis Rassiné, who I think is the best lyrical classical dancer in England. We had great surprise and pleasure to see him dance here in Paris on Television some weeks ago, in a beautiful solo by Ninette de Valois called *Vestris*. Wishing your interesting magazine continued success.

WARSAW, POLAND from Alice Okonska.

I saw in your journal the reproductions of the photos of pottery representing dancing people. I should be pleased if you were willing to insert the photos of my aquarelle representing *Swan Lake*. This and other sketches are in an exhibition in Warsaw.

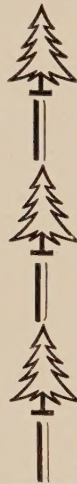
I have pleasure in publishing this at the top of this page.—Editor.

*Water colour sketch.

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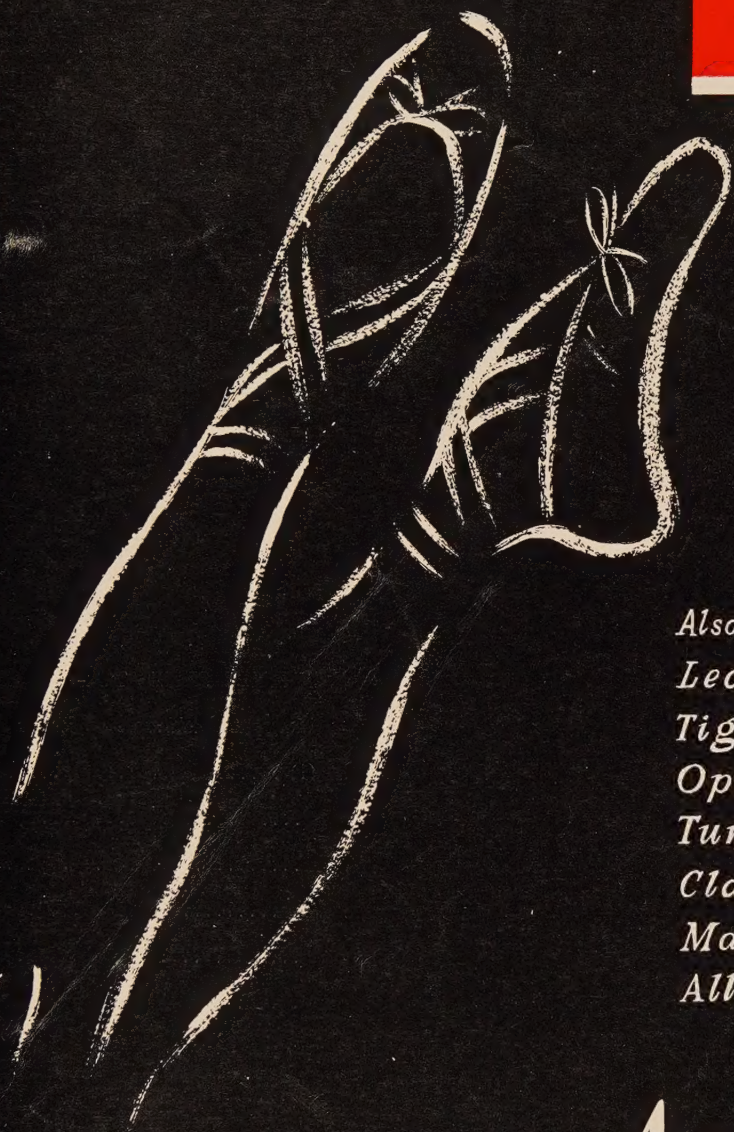
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Photo of Festival Ballet (above). by Mike Davis.

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